



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

JULY 13, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JURY CONVICTS TWO MEN OF COCAINE POSSESSION, EACH FACES TWO MANDATORY LIFE SENTENCES

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two Kansas City, Mo., men were found guilty by a jury in federal court today of all counts relating to their possessing with intent to distribute crack cocaine.

Thomas N. Johnson, 25, and **Lamell T. Jones**, 25, both of Kansas City, were found guilty by a federal trial jury of cocaine-related charges that were contained in a federal superseding indictment returned by a federal grand jury on March 31, 2005, in Kansas City.

Following the presentation of evidence in the trial, Graves said, the jury in U.S. District Court in Kansas City deliberated for about two hours before returning the guilty verdicts to U.S. District Judge Gary A. Fenner this morning, ending a trial that began on July 11, 2005.

The federal jury convicted **Jones** of possession with intent to distribute five grams or more of crack cocaine on Aug. 20, 2003, conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine between Dec. 6 and 7, 2003, possession with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine on Dec. 7, 2003, and possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine on Dec. 7, 2003, in Kansas City.

The federal jury convicted **Johnson** of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine between Dec. 6 and 7, 2003, possession with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine on Dec. 7, 2003, and possession with intent to distribute marijuana on Dec. 7, 2003, in Kansas City.

Under federal statutes, based on federal enhancements due to **Johnson's** and **Jones'** prior felony convictions, each defendant faces two mandatory life sentences in federal prison without parole, plus fines of up to \$4 million.

Johnson and **Jones** were initially arrested after law enforcement officers attempted to investigate a potential car accident on Dec. 7, 2003. At the time, **Johnson** attempted to flee the scene on foot, but was quickly apprehended. As officers arrested **Johnson**, **Jones** and another passenger also attempted to flee on foot. Officers observed **Jones** discard a clear plastic bag as he began to run. **Jones** was quickly captured, Graves said, but the third unknown party escaped.

The bag that **Jones**' discarded contained 4.46 grams of crack cocaine, individually wrapped in nine smaller bags, Graves said. Law enforcement officers also discovered that **Jones** was in possession of \$3,149.

A search of **Johnson** revealed in his possession a purple Crown Royal bag holding 37 plastic bags each containing marijuana. The total weight of the marijuana was 90.8 grams. A search of the vehicle revealed an additional 57.3 grams of crack cocaine under the driver's seat.

The co-defendants were convicted of charges contained in a superseding indictment, which replaced charges contained in an original indictment that was returned by a federal grand jury on Sept. 8, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David DeTar Newbert. The case was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow